

## Minutes from the All Boards Meeting 04-13-17

### Town of Charlemont, Hawlemont Regional School

#### **The following are minutes from the Town of Charlemont's All Boards Meeting held Thursday, April 13, 2017, at Hawlemont Regional School Cafeteria at 7:00 P.M.**

Present: Select Board Chair Beth Bandy, and Select Board members Sarah Reynolds and Toby Gould, Doug Annear – Fire Chief, Dana Johnson – Ambulance Director, resident Marguerite Willis, Planning Board Chair Robert Malone, Planning Board member Gisela Walker, Conservation Commission Chair and Board of Health Co-Chair Doug Telling, Broadband Committee member and web Administrator Cheryl Handsaker, Parks and Recreation Commission Chair and Flag Committee Chair Jerry Dupree, Capital Improvement Committee Chair Tracy Hall, Capital Improvement Committee and Finance Committee member Ron Smith, and Capital Improvement Committee and Hawlemont Regional School Committee member Erwin Reynolds.

1. The Capital Improvement Committee, who had been meeting in the cafeteria prior to the All Boards meeting, were introduced. The Committee outlined that they met with the departments to come up a five-year plan. The fiscal year 2018 recommendations were handed out.
2. There was discussion about what the process for coming up with the recommendations was, and there were many questions asked, such as whether this has come to the joint budget committee which it has, and when asked what are the next five years like, explained that there is catching up that needs to be done.
3. It was asked if the Town has looked into shared services. The Select Board talked about shared services for equipment not typically used at the same time. The Select Board liaison to the Highway Sarah Reynolds announced that the Town of Charlemont is entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Hawley to share Highway equipment for the first time; Charlemont has a chipper for Hawley to use, Hawley has a tractor that Charlemont can use. The Select Board Chair Beth Bandy shared that the Towns are starting to meet to discuss police services with other towns, involving Rowe, Heath, Hawley. The Select Board shared that the Select Board have been meeting in a Small Town Summit, where it was determined that there are towns to have potential shared services.
4. There was a discussion about whether there were any plans to look ahead at Town Hall improvements, how the Town needs to get ADA compliance in place, and that the Town is having energy evaluations done right now.
5. An overview of the efforts made to find revenue opportunities was given. Recreation tax would offer the greatest amount of revenue. The Select Board outlined the sequence of events for the rec tax, the Select Board's efforts to secure funds, and their efforts to look for creative solutions. Over the last couple of years, the Select Board has looked at all revenue opportunities. The Select Board looked at Town owned properties for revenue opportunities. The Town has acquired vacant lands through tax title that will be going to auction. For economic development, the Town needs broadband.
6. There was a discussion of efforts to address bridges, thanks to the \$20,000 that was approved in Town Meeting last year. The Town is using the same engineers who performed the bridge evaluations through a grant last year. The long bridge is on the list of bridges to be repaired; Sarah as Highway liaison has been talking to the Department of Transportation who recommended we start applying. So far the Town can cross off the list of bridges that need to be funded the 8A bridges, the Maxwell Road bridges, and Legate. Tower and West Oxbow are going to be completed by the State. The Select Board is being a lot more proactive about the future of the Town, but we have a long ways to go.

7. The Select Board recognized that the Capital Improvement Committee has done a tremendous job. Items requested are things we need to keep our town residents and volunteers safe.
8. The finance committee will put together a presentation showing the tax rate.
9. The Capital Improvement Committee mentioned that the reason the 5-year plan will be important is to show how deferring these expenses impacts future years. A lot of the Committee's meetings were field trips to view inventory and their condition. Other things they've looked at for future spending are how to repurpose equipment, increasing its lifespan.
10. There was a discussion of why new and not used equipment was being requested. They end up putting more maintenance into these vehicles. Could the Town save on maintenance if purchasing new? Can you reduce the budget to reflect savings maintenance? Optimistically, if purchase new vehicles. Can they show that differential between new vs. maintenance? This Town has the lowest Highway budget of any surrounding town besides Savoy for maintenance. As the Town is building the budget, the data will glean what savings can be found.
11. There was a brief discussion about saving for future expenses.
12. The Select Board then opened it up to the Boards.
13. Cheryl Handsaker gave a Broadband update. There are lot new possibilities that are more affordable. The Governor delayed this effort. The Broadband Committee got (4) four responses to the request for information. The Committee is assessing risk/benefits, meeting every other week, and things are moving quickly. They are ready to move ahead with pole survey. They want to get private provider to own the network. Steve Ferguson and Trevor Mackie did a pole count for the Town. The Handsakers and Trevor Mackie have been attending meetings.
14. Jerry Dupree gave an update on the Flag Committee. He highlighted the new banners that will be put up.
15. Robert Malone gave Planning Board update. The Board sent letters to the Class I and Class II dealer license holders to let them know what they can and cannot do. In some cases, they witnessed that license holders are outside what they are supposed to do. The Planning Board has recently been trying to find out whether there can be some flexibility to waive requirements in subdivisions to bring roads up to standard because 20-30 years ago there were subdivisions approved, that are now unbuildable. Robert mentioned that he is happy to see the Country Store in business and suggested people visit 90 Main Street.
16. There was a question whether there was any movement on AT&T providing more/better cell service. Someone shared that AT&T is not interested, to which a comment was made that Towns out west are putting up with less.
17. The Governor made a statement in the state of state, that Universal Broadband is needed. This is happening because of the hard work being done by a tremendous number of people.
18. Cheryl gave an update from the Agriculture Committee. They are attempting to collect a contact list of people who are actively trying to farm.
19. The All Board meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm.

Respectfully submitted by Peg Dean 05-11-17

Draft minutes for the Select Board until approved by the Select Board